remitting the growers' share of 1/3rd interest on Special Coffee Term Loan (SCTL) during the moratoruim period from 30.6.2005 to 31.3.2006.

(c) There is no proposal to extend any additional benefits.

Steps to contain falling tobacco prices

745. SHR NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that due to falling tobacco prices, the tobacco growers of Andhra Pradesh and various other States are facing problems in various other States are facing problems in purchasing seeds and fertilizers and are not in a position to continue tobacco cultivation which is leading to huge loss of foreign exchange to our nation;

(b) if so, whether Government would assure of making procurement of entire tobacco production mandatory through Tobacco Board, which may fix remunerated prices of tobacco every year;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) The quantity of tobacco marketed and the average price realised is increasing year by year. The foreign exchange earnings are also increasing. The Tobacco Board facilitates supplies of major inputs like seeds and fertilisers to registered growers.

(b) to (d) The average price realisation by growers is well above the Minimum Support Price (MSP) fixed by the Government. Hence, the need for market intervention/procurement by Tobacco Board is not deemed necesary.

AEZ for Tobacco in A.P.

746. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that tobacco exports from the country have crossed an all time high during this year touching 163 tonnes valued at about Rs. 1,362 crore;